

Public Health at Johns Hopkins

The School of Hygiene and Public Health at Johns Hopkins was founded in 1916 with funding from the Rockefeller Foundation (RF). The school was the érst of its kind in the United States and became enormously inêuential in the éield.



Preparing for Success

The RF's decision to invest in public health education was a natural extension of its already established role in improving basic medical education (/medical-education) and conducting global campaigns against targeted diseases. Prior to its investment in public health education, the RF had waged international health campaigns to eradicate hookworm (/eradicating-hookworm), malaria (/malaria) and yellow fever (/yellow-fever). These campaigns demonstrated the need for appropriately educated health officers to organize and manage the campaigns and to emphasize the importance of prevention to local populations and governments. Success in these campaigns depended upon selecting and educating these officers.

The prospect of public health education was first explored in 1913 in a report prepared by Wickliffe Rose (/biographical/-/asset_publisher/6ygcKECNI1nb/content/wickliffe-rose?) and William Welch, former Dean of Johns Hopkins Medical School and a General Education Board (GEB) (/the-general-education-board) Board Member. The report emphasized the need for the RF to become involved in public health education and outlined a plan for it to do so.

Choosing Johns Hopkins

The decision to establish the first public health institute at Baltimore's Johns Hopkins University came after a survey conducted by Wickliffe Rose, Abraham Flexner (/biographical/-/asset_publisher/6ygcKECNI1nb/content/abraham-flexner?) and Jerome Greene (/biographical/-/asset_publisher/6ygcKECNI1nb/content/jerome-greene?) on behalf of the GEB. These men visited and surveyed four institutions in competition for the RF funding, including Columbia University, Harvard University, the University of Pennsylvania (Penn) and Johns Hopkins University. The final report of this survey acknowledged that Columbia, Harvard and Penn possessed superior supporting university departments and were located in cities with strong health

departments. Although Hopkins was described as “inferior” in certain areas, Hopkins was unanimously chosen based on the potential of its existing medical school, which was described as “...the University’s greatest asset.” The authors continued, “It is a genuine University department, on the clinical as well as the laboratory side. The faculty is a small body, and, since the introduction of the full-time scheme, entirely homogenous in character, animated by high ideals and very efficiently led.” [1]



(/digital-library-listing/-/asset_publisher/yYxpQfeI4W8N/content/class-in-bacteriology-school-of-hygiene-and-public-health-johns-hopkins-university)

Class in bacteriology, School of Hygiene and Public Health, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore (Md.)

The first administrative records of the program reflect a sense of optimism about the institution’s future. The school promised:

1. To offer all kinds of public health training
2. To work out standards of education
3. To promote research
4. To form connections with other training centers at home and abroad
5. To offer public health fellowships on an international scale
6. To co-operate with Government agencies
7. To render valuable aid to the International Health Board[2]

The school at Johns Hopkins grew to be a model of public health education and was referred to by RF President George Vincent ([/biographical/-/asset_publisher/6ygcKECNI1nb/content/george-e-vincent?](#)) as the “West Point of public health.” [3] Under the directorship of Welch, the school attracted the best faculty working in éelds such as preventative medicine, sanitation and bacteriology. The curriculum was inter-disciplinary and oèered students experience in public health research work, as well as the practical training to work in city and state health departments or as RF éield staè.



([/digital-library-listing/-/asset_publisher/yYxpQfel4W8N/content/class-in-public-health-administration-school-of-hygiene-and-public-health-john-hopkins-university](#))
 Class in public health administration, School of Hygiene and Public Health,
 John Hopkins University, Baltimore (Md.) 1921

From 1916 to 1947 the RF contributed \$8 million in funding to the School of Hygiene and Public Health. Further funding was provided after 1948 for the emerging éelds of mental health care and public health nursing ([/nursing-education](#)).

[1] Institute of Public Health, Final Report of the General Education Board, January 26, 1916, Rockefeller Archive Center (RAC), RG 1.1, Series 200L, Box 185, Folder 2226.
 ([/digital-library-listing/-/asset_publisher/yYxpQfel4W8N/content/institute-of-public-health-énal-report-of-the-general-education-board](#))

[2] Minutes of the Rockefeller Foundation, December 5, 1917, RAC, RG 1.1, Series 200L, Box 185, Folder 2225. (/digital-library-listing/-/asset_publisher/yYxpQfel4W8N/content/minutes-of-the-rockefeller-foundation-page-5180)

[3] Raymond B. Fosdick, *The Story of the Rockefeller Foundation* (New Brunswick, USA: Transaction Publishers, 1952) 42.

Resources From the Digital Library



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Minutes of the Rockefeller Foundation, page 1053; Rockefeller Foundation; 1913-12-20 (/digital-library-listing/-/asset_publisher/yYxpQfel4W8N/content/minutes-of-the-rockefeller-foundation-page-1053)



(/digital-library-listing/-/asset_publisher/yYxpQfel4W8N/content/institute-of-public-health-Énal-report-of-the-general-education-board)

Institute of public health: Énal report of the General Education Board; General Education Board; 1916-01-26 (/digital-library-listing/-/asset_publisher/yYxpQfel4W8N/content/institute-of-public-health-Énal-report-of-the-general-education-board)



(/digital-library-listing/-/asset_publisher/yYxpQfel4W8N/content/minutes-from-a-meeting-of-the-committee-on-an-institute-of-hygiene)

Minutes from a meeting of the Committee on an Institute of Hygiene; Greene, Jerome D.; 1916-04-18 (/digital-library-listing/-/asset_publisher/yYxpQfel4W8N/content/minutes-from-a-meeting-of-the-committee-on-an-institute-of-hygiene)



(/digital-library-listing/-/asset_publisher/yYxpQfel4W8N/content/minutes-of-the-rockefeller-foundation-pages-4064-4066)

Minutes of the Rockefeller Foundation, pages 4064-4066; Rockefeller Foundation; 1916-06-12 (/digital-library-listing/-/asset_publisher/yYxpQfel4W8N/content/minutes-of-the-rockefeller-foundation-pages-4064-4066)



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memorandum-on-the-establishment-of-a-school-of-hygiene-and-public-health-by-the-rockefeller-foundation)

No. 7143, memorandum on the establishment of a School of Hygiene and Public Health by the Rockefeller Foundation; Rockefeller Foundation; 1916-06-14 (/digital-library-listing/-/asset_publisher/yYxpQfel4W8N/content/no-7143-memorandum-on-the-establishment-of-a-school-of-hygiene-and-public-health-by-the-rockefeller-foundation)



(/digital-library-listing/-/asset_publisher/yYxpQfeI4W8N/content/minutes-of-the-rockefeller-foundation-page-5180)

Minutes of the Rockefeller Foundation, page 5180; Rockefeller Foundation; 1917-12-05 (/digital-library-listing/-/asset_publisher/yYxpQfeI4W8N/content/minutes-of-the-rockefeller-foundation-page-5180)



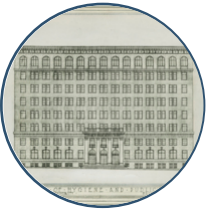
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Class in public health administration, School of Hygiene and Public Health, John Hopkins University; 1921 (/digital-library-listing/-/asset_publisher/yYxpQfeI4W8N/content/class-in-public-health-administration-school-of-hygiene-and-public-health-john-hopkins-university)



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Class in the Intensive Course for Public Health Officers, School of Hygiene and Public Health; 1921 (/digital-library-listing/-/asset_publisher/yYxpQfeI4W8N/content/class-in-the-intensive-course-for-public-health-officers-school-of-hygiene-and-public-health)



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Exterior elevation of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health; Archer and Allan Architects; 1922-04-24 (/digital-library-listing/-/asset_publisher/yYxpQfeI4W8N/content/exterior-elevation-of-the-johns-hopkins-bloomberg-school-of-public-health)



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Class in bacteriology, School of Hygiene and Public Health, Johns Hopkins University (/digital-library-listing/-/asset_publisher/yYxpQfeI4W8N/content/class-in-bacteriology-school-of-hygiene-and-public-health-johns-hopkins-university)



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Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health; Knobloch, C. C. (/digital-library-listing/-/asset_publisher/yYxpQfeI4W8N/content/johns-hopkins-university-school-of-hygiene-and-public-health)

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